

Next City is searching for a Host City for the 2019 Vanguard Conference.



NEXT CITY VANGUARD CONFERENCE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Issued: January 31, 2018

Deadline: June 18, 2018

Please send proposals via email by 5pm Friday,
June 18th to Sara Schuenemann,
Director of Events and Development

sara@nextcity.org

1. OVERVIEW

Next City is looking to identify a host city for its 2019 Vanguard conference to take place in the spring of 2019. Vanguard is an annual leadership gathering of rising urban leaders working to improve cities. This is a unique opportunity for a city to show off its latest urban development projects to a leading media organization, share innovations with the country's smartest emerging leaders and get ideas from bright young thinkers. Past conference participants included 40 young leaders (nextcity.org/vanguard/members) selected by a competitive application process representing a diverse array of professions, backgrounds and regions.

In the 2019 Vanguard, Next City will be looking for innovative partners who can help the organization take the conference to the next level. We are actively considering ideas for unique programmatic changes and/or partnerships and sponsorships that can expand the impact of the conference and help to make this event more sustainable as an earned revenue opportunity for Next City, which will ensure that the organization can continue to offer this unique experience.

2. ABOUT NEXT CITY

Next City is a non-profit organization with a mission to inspire social, economic and environmental change in cities by creating journalism and events around the world. Next City's daily online coverage of public policy and current affairs, focused on economic development, sustainability, infrastructure and civic tech draws 500,000 monthly readers. In addition to our online journalism, Next City offers professional development opportunities and produces events and conferences.

3. ABOUT VANGUARD

Vanguard is an annual experiential urban leadership gathering of the best and brightest rising urban leaders working to improve cities across sectors, including urban planning, community development, entrepreneurship, government, transportation, sustainability, design, art and media. Each year, Next City announces an open call for Vanguard participants. In 2016, we received more than 650 applications and selected 40 people whose bright ideas for cities, experience in the field and ambition for the future all showed great promise. These 40 Vanguards, joined by Vanguard alumni, host city committee members and Next City staff, gathered for a three and a half-day series of presentations, workshops, neighborhood tours and more to collectively learn and think about how to tackle challenges faced by our cities. In 2014, the Vanguard conference initiated the Big Idea Challenge, where Vanguards form smaller groups and propose solutions for the host city that can inspire change. Following the Vanguard 2017 conference, the winning team's idea is currently being developed and implemented in Montreal by the local Vanguards and members of the Host Committee.

Vanguard is an especially powerful opportunity for emerging and mid-career leaders who may be working in fields that don't typically offer opportunities for professional development and knowledge sharing across different disciplines and sectors. Next City is committed to ensuring that all invited Vanguards can participate, and each year the organization has covered the majority of conference costs for participants, including conference attendance, most meals and local travel. Vanguards are expected to pay for travel to and from the conference. Past Vanguard conferences have been held in Newcastle, AU (2017) Montreal, QC (2017), Houston, TX (2016), Reno, NV (2015), Chattanooga, TN (2014), Cleveland (2013), St. Louis (2012), Philadelphia (2010) and Washington, D.C. (2009).

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Lead Sponsors

In selecting a city to host Vanguard, Next City seeks one or more Lead Sponsors who can provide full financial support and collaborate with Next City shape the conference. The Lead Sponsor will provide a direct contact for Next City to speak with on a weekly basis throughout the planning of the conference which typically begins in September. Lead sponsors will work with Next City to develop shared goals and issue areas/themes for the conference. In the past, sponsors have included chambers of commerce, local foundations, economic development corporations, marketing and tourism bureaus, universities or a combination of the above. Lead sponsors collaborate with Next City to select and invite local urban leaders representing diverse sectors and interests to serve on a conference Host Committee.

Host Committee

Members of the Host Committee, including representatives of sponsoring organizations, representatives of local government, and other stakeholders will work with Next City staff to chart out the conference's programming, logistics, and theme. Critically, the committee curates local tours that showcase exciting initiatives and innovative projects, as well as areas of the city that demonstrate its challenges. The Host Committee will participate in portions of the conference, engage and network with Vanguards at various receptions, and play a strategic role in executing the Big Idea Challenge. In addition, the Host Committee will work with Next City to identify and engage sponsors, and ensure the conference meets financial goals.

Activities may include:

- Participate in regular conference calls with Next City staff;
- Recommend and connect Next City staff with local vendors and locations;
- Recommend and connect Next City staff with potential sponsors;
- Design and facilitate local tours;
- Serve as speakers, moderators and/or provide on-site support for events, where necessary;
- Promote attendance at any Vanguard events open to the public and coordinate local PR efforts;
- Promote conference to local government and involve local mayor to participate in various events, including welcoming Vanguards and attending the Big Idea Challenge.

Budget

The cost of organizing and holding the conference depends on the location, lodging options and the finalized agenda and activities. Next City and the Lead Sponsor(s) will work together in partnership with the Host Committee to raise additional grants and corporate sponsorships to enhance the overall content. Some in-kind contributions, such as free event space, can offset hard costs. A key aspect of the Vanguard conference is that conference attendee's costs are kept to a minimum. To ensure the sustainability of this program and to grow it in future years, Next City will work with partners to develop a budget that covers Next City's administrative costs and allows the conference to raise funds that can be channeled back into the organization to build our capacity for future Vanguard conferences and other important programs. Next City asks that small cities (size < 100,000) demonstrate a \$90,000 commitment, medium sized cities (size < 500,000) demonstrate a \$120,000 commitment and large cities (cities > 500,000+) demonstrate a \$150,000 commitment.

Next City will be responsible for the following activities:

- Next City staff will coordinate all programming and logistics in advance and during the three-day conference in your city, which will be open to selected Vanguard applicants, alumni, Host Committee members and other relevant community partners;
- Next City will cover the host city with two to four blog posts in the weeks leading up to, during or after the conference;
- Next City and 40+ rising leaders from around the country will provide additional coverage of your city on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram;
- The convention bureau or other local promotional partner will receive free ad space on NextCity.org for 3 months;
- See nextcity.org/vanguard for additional benefits of hosting the conference.

5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

To apply, please submit a comprehensive proposal with the following information.

1. Letter of Interest (3-page max)

The letter should include the following information:

- Brief description of the Lead Sponsor(s) and your vision for the Vanguard conference in your city;
- How your organization's activities align with the conference, and your anticipated outcomes;
- Suggested opportunities and challenges that would serve as the basis for the content development of the conference;
- One or more big ideas for how to make the 2019 conference bigger, better or more impactful;
- Your funding commitment and strategy, including detail on secured and/or pledged funds, in addition to any other ideas for support;
- An overview of the strengths and resources of your organization(s) and Host Committee, specifically your experience with tours, event planning, hosting conferences, multi-stakeholder partnerships, or other relevant activities.

2. Proposed Host Committee (1 page max)

Please include the organization name and a brief description of each organization. Please include proposed host member names and titles if possible. Host committees should be representative of the diverse communities in your city.

3. Supporting Material

In addition, please send us material on your city, including basic information and demographics, recent innovations, case studies, leadership profiles or challenges. These can be in any format, including written information, videos, or links.

Please submit the following items by June 18th, 2018 to Sara Schuenemann via email (sara@nextcity.org).

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Financial Feasibility: The applicant has demonstrated financial commitment and proposed fundraising strategy;

Innovation and Synergy: The host city has a dynamic civic ecosystem with leaders who are enthusiastic and flexible. There are clear, shared goals and interests and innovative ideas that will expand or enhance the existing platform;

Experience: Lead sponsors and Host Committee are committed to improving their city and have experience with the content areas, multi-faceted partnerships, developing conferences and/or similar events.

Questions? Call or email

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For more information visit nextcity.org or nextcity.org/vanguard

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

nextcity.org/pdf/VG_2017_AUSTRALIA_FINAL_pages_lores.pdf

nextcity.org/pdf/VG_2017_FINALPRINT_lores_NOEMAIL.pdf

SAMPLE NEXT CITY COVERAGE

Why Next City is Pending a Week in Newcastle Australia / November 6, 2017

nextcity.org/press/entry/next-city-vanguards-share-design-solutions-in-first-australian-big-idea-cha

Next City Vanguards to converge on Newcastle, Australia / September 18, 2017

nextcity.org/press/entry/next-city-vanguards-to-converge-on-newcastle-australia

Next City Vanguards to Converge on Montreal / March 8, 2017

nextcity.org/press/entry/next-city-vanguards-to-converge-on-montreal

What if Houston Fell in Love With Planning / May 9, 2016

nextcity.org/features/view/houston-flood-development-gentrification

Houston Gets a Transit Oriented Development Spark / May 18, 2016

nextcity.org/daily/entry/next-city-vanguard-big-idea-challenge-winners-houston-2016

Reimagining Under Utilized Property is Key to Houston's Equitable Growth / May 5, 2016

nextcity.org/daily/entry/houston-vacant-unused-land-buildings

Houston Attitudes Changing on Inequality, Urban life / April 27, 2016

nextcity.org/daily/entry/survey-houston-urban-change-immigration-inequality

Why Houston Can Lead Urban Change in the Sunbelt / April 25, 2016

nextcity.org/daily/entry/william-fulton-kinder-institute-houston-interview

SAMPLE OF OTHER COVERAGE

Celine Cooper: Next City Vanguard conference will help Montreal tackle the urban issues that matter / Montreal Gazette / May 15, 2016

www.montrealgazette.com/opinion/columnists/celine-cooper-next-city-vanguard-conference-will-help-montreal-tackle-the-urban-issues-that-matter

Experiencing Houston as a Next City Vanguard / Modern Cities / May 24, 2016

www.moderncities.com/article/2016-may-experiencing-houston-as-a-next-city-vanguard

What's Your Bold Idea for Public Spaces in Houston? / The Urban Edge / May 20, 2016

urbanedge.blogs.rice.edu/category/vanguard-2016/#.V1hKtZMr16g

Considering Old Buildings and the People Who Live in Them / Houston Chronicle / May 12, 2016

www.houstonchronicle.com/business/real-estate/article/Considering-old-buildings-and-the-people-who-7465747.php

Young Urban Leaders Offer Insight On Houston's Strengths and Weaknesses in National Conference / Houston Public Media / May 13, 2016

www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2016/05/12/150201/young-urban-leaders-offer-insight-on-houstons-strengths-and-weaknesses-in-national-conference/

Celine Cooper: Next City Vanguard Conference Will Help Montreal Tackle the Urban Issues that Matter / The Montreal Gazette / May 17, 2016

montrealgazette.com/opinion/columnists/celine-cooper-next-city-vanguard-conference-will-help-montreal-tackle-the-urban-issues-that-matter